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BALTIMORE COUNTY PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Sheldon S. Epstein, Chair

--DRAFT--

MEETING NOTES Tuesday, September 9, 2014 4:00 p.m.

Attendees: Chair Sheldon Epstein, Ray Bahr, Laura Cook, Linda Grossman, Jim Kelly, Carol Silldorff, Pat McDougall, Kris Nebre

Absent: Gene Bertoni, Hir Bhandari, Jay Burman, Ted Levin, Allysha Lorber, Myron Williams, Robert Barrett

Department of Planning staff present included Jeff Mayhew, Kathy Schlabach, Jessie Bialek and Janice Graves.

1. Introduction of Members and Announcements

Mr. Sheldon Epstein opened the meeting at 4:28 p.m. While a quorum of members was not in attendance, the meeting was started with the belief that additional members would be arriving shortly. After introductions, Mr. Epstein made the following announcements:

- The construction of the Towson Bike Beltway will be completed soon, and a celebration is set for September 17. Members have a flyer at their seats and are encouraged to attend and participate in the inaugural bike ride.
- Baltimore County has received grants from the Maryland Bikeways Program for the two projects recommended by this committee--\$50,000 for Phase 2 of the Dundalk bike loop and \$18,300 for the extension of the Security-Ingleside bike route. The county also received a grant for \$50,000 in partnership with the Franklinton Community Association to replace storm drain grates in their community. In addition, the state Department of Natural Resources received a nearly \$250,000 grant for the construction of the North Point Trail.

2. Review of Today's Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

3. Approval of Meeting Notes of the April 22, 2014 Meeting

This item was skipped as there was not enough committee members present for a quorum.

4. Staff Report Introduction and Vote: Revised 2014 Work Program and Proposed 2015 Meeting Schedule and Work Program

Ms. Kathy Schlabach reviewed the revised work program and the proposed 2015 meeting schedule and work program.

For the March 10, 2015 meeting Ms. Schlabach suggested that instead of having a CIM (citizen input meeting), the meeting would focus on the activities of the 5th District Committee and the BMC BPAG. The County has a backlog of projects that have received MD Bikeways grants and can't take on any new projects. Ms. Schlabach suggested the committee have a CIM every two years to coincide with the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process.

During the discussion committee members made the following points:

It was noted that there is no separate budget for bicycle and pedestrian projects. Mr. Pat McDougall stated that the CIP includes some trail funding such as the Indian Rocks segment of the Northeast Trail, in the Recreation and Parks budget when the project is in or around a county park. Mr. Bahr suggested that a public meeting for people to hear the update on the projects would be beneficial.

Ms. Carol Silldorff said she would not want to take away the citizens' opportunity to express their opinions. She stated that the last public meeting was well attended and that the public still needs to know what's going on. Ms. Silldorff also said that she has expected the comparison study of regional funding programs for bicycle improvements to be presented at this meeting. Ms. Silldorff suggested that the Planning Department could hire an intern to complete the study.

Mr. Epstein stated that rapport with the public is important and agreed with having a public meeting on project status.

Dr. Linda Grossman suggested that people could volunteer instead of just asking the County to do projects.

5. Staff Report Introduction and Vote: Recommendations for the Legislative Amendments in Support of Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

Ms. Schlabach presented a summary of the staff report recommendations for legislative amendments in support of pedestrian and bicycle access. A search of both the County Code and the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations did not reveal any significant need for legislative amendments, other than what was already identified in the Eastern and Western Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Plans. These recommended revisions included bicycle parking, easements for

sidewalks instead of right-of-ways, adoption of Complete Street Guidelines into the Comprehensive Manual of Development Policies, a fee-in-lieu payments when developers are granted waivers for sidewalks and sidepaths, revising the Local Open Space Manual to allow paths to meet local open space requirements and addressing the legal, maintenance, and liability issue associated with the construction of sidepaths.

In general, the group concurred with staff recommendations except on the issues of sidepaths and fee-in-lieu payments.

Mr. Bahr stated that the complete streets policy has gotten national recognition and still believes that the fee-in-lieu for waivers of sidewalks and bicycle facilities is important. Mr. McDougall noted that developers are required to provide local open space, but some choose not to and pay a fee-in-lieu. Mr. Bahr said that he was concerned about leaving the decision up to the county and thought that the county might rather have the money. Ms. Schlabach stated that developers would still have to provide an area for the sidewalk or bike facility and make sure that they are in a public right-of-way even if they are going to pay a fee-in-lieu.

Mr. Bahr and others on the committee noted that there are a wide variety of programs that have a fee-in-lieu option. Several committee members thought that getting this type of rule on the books would be beneficial, giving the complete streets policy some teeth.

Mr. Bahr and others stated that there should not be limited language for users of sidepaths and that it should be defined more like a shared use trail, where people can also use segways or e-bikes. The committee discussed the pros and cons of sidepaths as a type of bicycle improvement and how they should be regulated.

6. Other Business

Mr. McDougall stated that the Indian Rock Trail is almost complete and that the Catonsville Community Trail will be going forward. Also, the Department of Recreation and Parks has been working with the Department of Health and the Office of Information Technology to create a on-line trail finder application, which maps all of the state and county trails located in Baltimore County.

Since there were not enough members in attendance for a quorum, Ms. Schlabach asked the group whether they thought the meeting time should be changed to a later time to allow people more time to get to the meeting. Mr. Bahr and Ms. Cook stated that they thought that the 4:00 meeting time was acceptable, but that the people that are not in attendance should be consulted.

7. Adjournment

The chair called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, but since there was no quorum, there was no need for a second and the meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.